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Deploying a Node.js or Python app from Git: pull, install, restart

Deploy, Logs & Access

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Deploying a Node.js or Python app from Git: pull, install, restart

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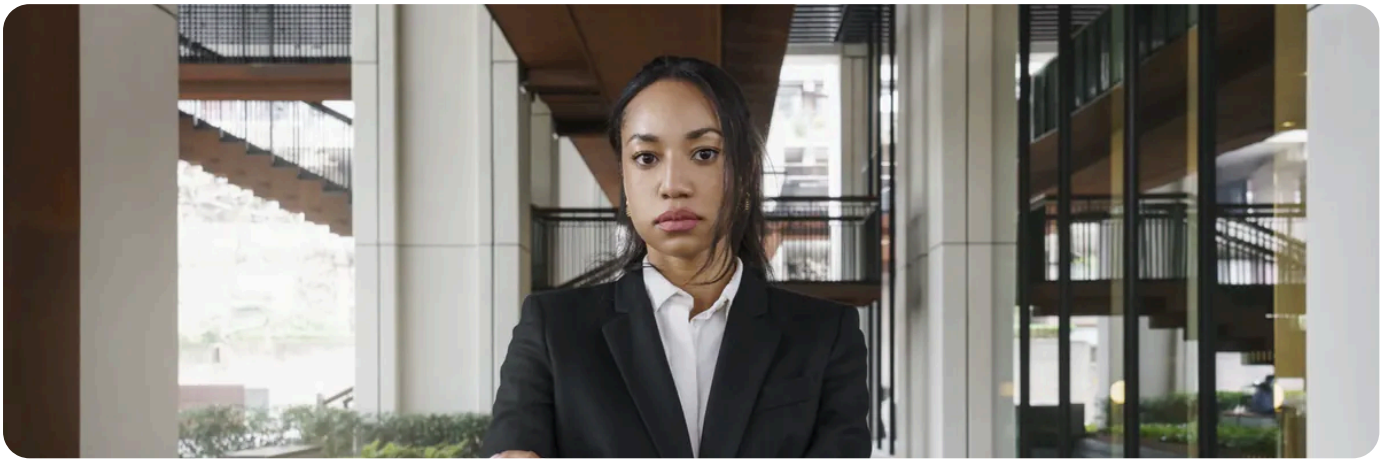

Publishing over FTP works, until the day you forget a file. With Git, deployment becomes the same sequence every time: **pull the code, install the dependencies, restart**. On a PHP site, copying files is enough; on a Node.js or Python application the last two steps are missing, and that is where deployments fail. This article puts the sequence in order, for cPanel and for a VPS.

The sequence, and what each step does

Step	Node.js	Python
1. Pull the code	`git pull`	`git pull`
2. Install the dependencies	`npm ci` (in cPanel, “Run NPM Install”)	`pip install -r requirements.txt` (in cPanel, “Run Pip Install”)
3. Build, if needed	`npm run build`	In Django: `python manage.py migrate` and `collectstatic`
4. Restart	The application’s button (cPanel), or `pm2 restart name` (VPS)	The application’s button (cPanel), or `sudo systemctl restart name` (VPS)

In cPanel

1. **Create the repository in the account** with cPanel’s version control tool, or with `git clone` in Terminal, in a folder **outside the public folder**. A private repository needs the server to have access: see the warning below. The tool’s walk-through, and why `.git` never stays in view, is in **publishing your site from a repository**.

2 **Use that folder as the application root** in “Setup Node.js App” or “Setup Python App”. That way `git pull` updates exactly what the application runs.

3 **Enter the application’s environment** (the command is at the top of the screen), then pull and install:

```
git pull
npm ci
```

4 **Restart with the button on the application screen.** Without the restart, the application keeps serving the old code.

On a VPS: a deployment script

On a VPS you write the sequence once, in a file, and run it with a single command. Example for a Node.js application with PM2 (adapt the folders and the name):

```
#!/bin/bash
set -e
cd /home/appuser/app
git pull --ff-only
npm ci
npm run build
pm2 restart my-app
```

`set -e` makes the script stop at the first error, so it does not restart an application halfway through a failed install. For Python, swap the middle lines for `.venv/bin/pip install -r requirements.txt` and restart the service with `sudo systemctl restart name`.

! **Private repository: use a read-only key.**
Do not put your Git password on the server. Create an SSH key pair on the server (`ssh-keygen -t ed25519`) and register the public key as a read-only “deploy key” on the service that hosts the repository. If the key leaks, all it can do is read one repository. And never put `.env` , `node_modules` or the virtual environment in the repository.

To roll back
, Git keeps the history: `git log --oneline` lists the versions and `git checkout identifier` goes back to one (then install and restart as above). If you deploy often, test on a subdomain first. Variables and secrets stay out of the code: **environment variables and secrets**.

RECOMMENDED

Want a server where you can automate the whole deployment? Have a look at our VPS plans.

See the VPS servers →

SEE ALSO

- Git in cPanel: publishing your site from a repository →
- Keeping a Node.js app running on a VPS with PM2 →
- Getting a Node.js application running →

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